



NEW HAMPSHIRE ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS, INC.

Working Together to Make a Difference

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Minutes of a Virtual Regular Meeting of the NH Association of Fire Chiefs

Thursday, June 10, 2021 (Virtual via “Go To Meeting”)

The meeting was called to order at 1606 hours by Chief Sitar.

Members of the NH Information Analysis Center presented a module on cybersecurity and steps we can take to avoid ransomware.

After a salute to the flag, a moment of silence was requested for departed members.

Chief Sitar welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Members were introduced by the Executive Director.

NOTE: ALL VOTES AT THIS MEETING WERE TAKEN BY CONSENSUS.

Special Guests: Adam Schmidt from our lobbying firm.

Minutes of the May 13 meeting were just posted today. Deferred acceptance until next meeting.

Financial Reports: March, April and May were just posted today. Deferred acceptance until next meeting.

Communications: Chief Lemire described letters of congratulations sent to professors Connell and Courtney on their retirements from LRCC and also letters of support for the nominations of Sean Toomey as Fire Marshal and Justin Cutting as Director of FST/EMS to the Governor’s Council members.

Applications for membership: 1 new member. Jarrod Wheeler, Operations Chief of the Rochester Fire Department.

Life Membership: Former Director of Fire Standards, Training and EMS Deborah Pendergast has been awarded Life Membership.

President's Report: (Sitar) –

- May 24, 2021, I participated on an interview panel for a new State Fire Investigator for the Fire Marshal's Office.
- Conversation with Marshal Toomey after his confirmation.
- Met with Director Cutting and discussed areas of possible change at the Fire Academy.
- Met with BoD Officers and Executive Director Lemire at our lobbyist's office with Adam Schmidt and Jodi Grimblas. Chief Beattie will report on the meeting. Afterwards we discussed the transition of responsibilities within the BoD.
- Working on recruiting additional Advocate Members for the organization.
- Will attend a meeting of the Five Families with Chief Beattie next week at the Fire Academy.

Executive Director's Report (Lemire) –

- Our Vendor Showcase will be held with our September meeting on the 9th at the Falls Event Center in Manchester. It will be our first "in person" meeting in 1.5 yrs.
- Our November weekend is on for the Red Jacket in North Conway, November 12-14.
- We will be also sponsoring a golf tournament August 9.
- I participated in interviews for new instructors at LRCC over the past couple of weeks. Process is ongoing.

1st Vice President Report (Beattie) –

- HB 111 – (Qualified Immunity) – they are following it as it may rear its ugly head again.
- HB 343 – (Ambulance Balance Billing) - sub-committee met yesterday to deal with the sponsor's newest iteration of the bill. She wants our support on this version but we are not in favor of it. They will be setting up a meeting next week.
- SB 142 (PTSB) committee is still working on supporting the bill.
- He suggested that the board review email addresses that the board prefers to use.

2nd Vice President Report (Emanuel) –

- On Tuesday June 8, 2021 President Sitar, Vice President Beattie, Sargent at Arms Larry Best, Executive Director Brent Lemire and I met with Jodi Grimblas and Adam Schmidt - JG Strategies our lobbyist group.

We discussed the state of the legislation in the house and senate and how the NH Association of Fire Chiefs would communicate with the firm.

We reviewed the highlights of impactful legislation on a 12 page list that the NHAFC is tracking. I am confident that we have a solid team working to track our legislation.

Sgt. At Arms (Best) – No report

Committee Reports

Scholarship Committee – (Dep. Toomey) – Deadline for submissions is July 1. Two applications have been received so far.

Recruitment and Retention Committee – (Chief Beattie) – (no report)

Division Reports

Fire Marshal – (Marshal Toomey)

He thanked all members for their support in his nomination and appointment as State Fire Marshal. He feels that is a great honor and will maintain partnerships that have been fostered.

ADMINISTRATION: (Assistant State Fire Marshal, Max Schultz)

Personnel:

We are in the process of hiring several positions within the division, including:

Full time Fire Investigator- Oral Boards completed, Director Interviews soon
Part time NFIRS Program Coordinator- will be posted soon
Part time State Building Inspector
Part time State Building Permit Coordinator
Part time Fire Protection Specialist (Inspector)

We are hopeful that filling these positions will allow us to better serve the needs of our constituents.

Website: We continue to update our new website. The new site link is: Firemarshal.dos.nh.gov

2021 Legislation:

We are following a number of bills, including:

HB 72 – Ratifying the amendments to the 2015 fire code by the BFC

*Status: Passed/Adopted with Amendment
House, Rereferred in the Senate*

SB 15 - Ratifying the amendments to the 2015 fire code by the BFC
Status: Passed/Adopted Senate, House Consent Calendar

HB 208 – Repealing the lightning rod program
Status: Signed by the Governor, effective January 1, 2022

SB 106 – Establishing a committee to study the adoption of the
2018 fire code
Status: Passed/Adopted Senate, House Consent Calendar

SB 106 – Repealing the voluntary fire equipment certification
program
Status: Passed/Adopted Senate, House Consent Calendar

HB 377 – Relative to the FMO issuing variances to recovery
residences
Status: Signed by the Governor, effective July 5, 2021

SB 133 – Relative to the FMO issuing POA permits
Status: Passed/Adopted Senate, House Consent Calendar

BUREAU OF INVESTIGATIONS: (Deputy Keith Rodenhiser)

New/Active cases: Seven (7) calls for service in the month of May; our 6 investigators and 2 district chiefs are actively working 19 criminal cases.

- On May 6, 2021, investigators assisted the Tilton Police Department with a fire set on the pavement in the parking lot behind the Tilton Touchless Car Wash at 64 E Main Street in Tilton. It is believed the fire was caused by an adult and two juveniles. The investigation is ongoing.
- On May 11, 2021, investigators responded to the Scamman Farm at 69 Portsmouth Avenue in Stratham to assist the Stratham FD and PD with a fire investigation at a large barn. At this time, the fire remains under investigation.
- On May 14, 2021, investigators responded to 13 Clark Avenue in Amherst to assist the Amherst FD and PD with an investigation into a residential explosion with fire and injury. One victim was transported to Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, MA for treatment of burn injuries. At this time, the incident remains under investigation but does not appear to be criminal in nature.
- On May 16, 2021, investigators responded to 108V Varney Road in Wolfeboro to assist the Wolfeboro FD with an investigation into a motor vehicle fire. At this time, the fire remains under investigation, but there does appear to be criminal indicators.

Ignitable Liquid Detection Canine Teams: Our two IGL Canine Teams were deployed one time in the month of May. A joint training day was conducted with

the IGL Canine Team from the Manchester Fire Department. Our canine teams also completed recertification, which is done on an annual basis.

Public Outreach: Investigators are assisting with youth firesetter assessments in multiple communities throughout the state. Our youth firesetter coordinator/investigator is also preparing presentations for school resource officers and child advocacy centers around the state.

Training/Committees: Investigators and/or Supervisors attended several trainings in the month of May, some to include: ICS-300: Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents, Firearms Instructor, Mental Health First Aid, Thermal Runaway in Stored Battery Systems, Domestic Terrorism/Racially Motivated Violent Extremists, and Fire Sprinkler Systems for the Fire Investigator.

Court Actions: Mary Elizabeth Corliss was arraigned on charges of Arson (Class A Felony), Reckless Conduct x2 (Class B Felonies) and Endangering the Welfare of a Child x2 (Misdemeanors) as a result of a fire in Webster on 02/24/21. The defendant and her two young children had to be rescued from the burning house and were admitted to various hospitals in Boston for treatment of their injuries sustained during the fire. Corliss's trial is expected to begin in November.

BUREAU OF BUILDING SAFETY & CONSTRUCTION: (Deputy Sean Toomey)

State Building Permit System: We processed 20 building permit applications in the month of May.

Technical Assistance, Educational & Healthcare Reviews: Our staff remains available for technical code assistance. We initiated 3 healthcare plan reviews in the month of May.

Variance Requests: We processed 3 variance requests in the month of May.

Modular Home Construction: We are working through an issue with the NH Building Officials Association and DOS Legal relative to the interpretation of the stair geometry requirements for modular homes. There is a concern that the Modular Building Code and International Residential Code conflict for stair geometry and the amendment relative to a steeper stairs for modular homes that has been in place since 1996 shouldn't apply.

Manufactured Homes versus Modular Homes: We have recently received some inquiries on the differences between manufactured homes and modular homes. Both homes are built off-site and transported for final assembly at the home site.

Manufactured homes, sometimes referred to as mobile homes are built to HUD Manufactured Construction and Safety Standards. The applicable laws and rules are RSA 205-D, Manufactured Housing Installation Standards and Inst 100-700, Manufactured Housing Installation Standards. It is important to note that manufactured housing installed

in accordance with RSA 205-D shall be exempt from all state or local standards or regulations which regulate the same matters. What this means is the inspectional role within the new home is limited as the home is built to the HUD standard and not the state building and fire codes. All utility, or exterior utility installations shall conform to the state building and fire codes. It is also customary for inspections by the building official for the foundation/anchoring system.

Modular homes are built to the Modular Building Code. Our office administers the modular building program in New Hampshire. The Modular Building Program has been in effect since July 1, 1993. The program was established in conjunction with various modular building manufacturers, third party inspection agencies, local and state code enforcement officials. The goal of the program is to assure modular construction is built in accordance with the codes and standards adopted at the state level. Compliance with the program is witnessed by the application of New Hampshire modular labels on each unit. The applicable laws and rules are RSA 205-C, Modular Building Standards and the Saf-C 3300, Modular Building Administrative Rules. Modular homes are required to meet local permitting and inspection requirements.

Sober Living/Recovery Residences: With the signing of HB 377 Relative to the FMO issuing variances to recovery residences we anticipate an increase in variances and questions. The goal of HB 377 was to define a consistent process and reasonable accommodation for recovery residences. The bill was a result of efforts between many stakeholders to include the fire service, legal community and recovery community. What this typically means is a reduction in the fire protection features in these homes to include the omission of an automatic sprinkler system in most instances and the allowance of a monitored residential fire alarm system for residences with more than 8 people. The intent is to allow a properly operated recovery house to function as if they are a single family dwelling instead of meeting all the requirements of a lodging and rooming house.

BUREAU OF PLANNING AND SUPPORT SERVICES: (Deputy Danielle Cole)

Hazardous Materials:

Hazardous Materials coordination and coverage remains a priority despite the state of emergency. Personnel are ready to deploy if needed and may be contacted through the on-call FMO supervisor for consultation purposes.

If you would like to virtually attend a one-hour training on the newly released suspicious unknown package protocol, please reach out to our Hazardous Materials Coordinator Jim Stone at James.H.Stone@dos.nh.gov. If you are from a smaller department please try to collaborate with a neighboring community for this training.

Fireworks:

Firework stores have been seasonably busy as many residents and visitors are looking to enjoy fireworks during this time of year. We have updated the Permissible Community Restrictions List and will be posting it on our website soon. Unsafe fireworks usage can result in injury, death, property damage and wildland

fires. Be sure to check out our website where we have provided information and safety tips about fireworks usage.

As social distancing and group gathering restrictions have changed, we have seen an increase in the amount of fireworks shows that are being scheduled throughout the state, this also includes concert venues. Our staff will be also be out during the 4th of July weekend to assist municipalities with display shows. Please contact us if you have questions related to fireworks shows, permits and licensing requirements.

Mechanical Inspectors:

Our mechanical inspectors are once again able to offer in person training sessions at for local departments, during the day or for night sessions. The following topics are available:

- (IPC) Municipal Inspectors Course
- 2009 to 2015 Code update course on NFPA 54
- 2009 to 2014 Code update course on NFPA 58
- 2009 to 2015 Code update course on International Plumbing Code
- 2009 to 2015 Code update course on International Residential Plumbing Code (IRC)

Please email Chief Mechanical Inspector Marc Prindiville to request a training Marc.Prindiville@DOS.NH.GOV

Fire Standards/Training/EMS – (Director Cutting/Asst. Director Phillips)

- On June 2nd, Governor and Council confirmed the selection of Justin Cutting as the new Director of the Division.
- The Division met with the leadership of the Lake Region Community College to discuss the ongoing partnership between the two organizations and to start looking at additional opportunities
- CPAT was conducted for June 8th, there were 56 candidates who took the exam. 38 passed, 17 failed. There is one more CPAT exam scheduled for September 13th. This is the last CPAT scheduled for 2021 and it will be held at the Fire Academy.
- Electrostatic Sprayers – Tablets are still available!
- Ongoing programs

- Recruit School orientation and Health and Fitness started this week. It is a full class, after orientation we have two individuals withdraw from the course and we are hoping to fill these spots via the waiting list.
 - 4 Firefighter I programs
 - 2 Firefighter II programs
 - Airport Firefighter starting in June
 - Fire Investigator starting in August
 - The fall slate of programs are currently being scheduled
 - For all training opportunities visit www.nhfa-ems.com
- The rollout of the New Firefighter I Train-the-Trainer program to current instructors continues to roll out
 - We are hoping to hear in the near future about our AFG request which, if awarded, will replace our Engine 1, 3 forcible entry door props the our certification testing software
 - In the upcoming month we are hoping to start piloting both the RespondNH system and the Fire Incident reporting system. Upon successfully completion of the pilot program we will be releasing both systems statewide.
 - All EMS COVID19 protocols are still in effect at this time.
 - Director Cutting thanked all of the members for their support for his nomination and appointment and pledged to maintain a

NH Fire Standards and Training Commission – (Chiefs Clark/Buxton)

*Notes to be forthcoming.

NH Emergency Medical and Trauma Services Coord. Board – (Chief Allard)

n/r

National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) – (Chief Corey) – n/r

Homeland Security and Emergency Management – (Director Harper)

- **State EOC as at partial activation status to respond to COVID-19 activities that include:**
 - State of Emergency (SoE) expires Friday, June 11th at midnight
 - Public Health Incident put in place 2020 continues to be in effect
 - Local conf call Wed June 16th at noon; we will end these on June 30th
 - Vaccine Immunization

- State fixed sites are only doing 2nd dose vaccines through June 30th. Vaccines will then be available through normal health care systems (ie., hospitals, Dr Office, pharmacies, etc.)
- COVID Presidential Disaster Declaration DR4516 received April 3, 2020.
 - To-date communities have been reimbursed \$3,094,452.84
- **Day-to-day HSEM activities:**
 - Planning for NASCAR Race - July 18th
 - Legacy disasters – more focus back on these
 - HSEM Training – coordinating with training partners to schedule courses
 - HSEM Exercises – beginning to schedule with communities
 - Radiological Program – Thanks to seacoast departments for participating with us to improve our plans, training, etc.
 - School Safety & Preparedness Program – scheduling security assessments with schools – like to have team to include local Fire/LE included in these
 - Community Outreach – updating materials for communities for summer weather events that you can use on social media, press briefs, etc.
 - More updates to come on programs/activities as we downshift from COVID.
- As always let me know if you need anything, my cell is 419-9179.

EMS Trauma Medical Review Board – (Chief Beaudoin) – n/r

Forest Protection Bureau – (Chief Sherman)

- We are currently going through the Forest Ranger hiring process. We have 1 position open right now and anticipate being able to fill two other vacancies when the new state budget is approved.
- The new online fire permit system went live this week. Some features of the system include:
 - Add new customers to the system
 - Log in-person permits online for no fee and print at the station
 - Quick burn tracking and lookups with a visual map (Great for Dispatch Centers)
 - Easy messaging to permittees via email and text to inform them of permit changes or cancellations
 - Updated print template
 - Administrator ability to immediately stop all sales or specific sales if weather condition change and add a restart time
- Customers/Permittees can log in at the same address as always: www.nhfirepermit.com or QR code:



- You as the Warden/Fire Department/Agent, can log in at the new address: <https://NH-Agent.BurnSafeAmerica.com>
 - Log-in with your old credentials
 - If you have an issue it may be because an email address was never set up in the old system or your old password may not meet the criteria for the new system
 - Contact Jen Little for assistance Jennifer.r.little@dncr.nh.gov

Board of Fire Control – (Chief Clark) – n/r

Building Code Review Board – (Marshal Lennon) – n/r

Manufactured Housing Installation Standards Board: (Chief) n/r

Division of Emergency Services and Communications – (Director Doyle) –

- DHS Data push, Card 36 (Protocol 36) interrogation has successfully been discontinued;
- Mutualink trainings continue, contact the SWIC at NHSWIC@dos.nh.gov for information on training opportunities;
- 9-8-8 Planning Coalition meetings and Subcommittee meetings held via Zoom. Subcommittee for 911 / L.E. review of process flow for call referral (PSAP to Headrest) and alternatives to LE Response, training & education needs and access to CMHC's and CIT's;
- Radio Communications support / planning underway for “Bike Week” in Laconia;
- **REMINDER: Impact of the 10-digit dialing requirement for all local calls in New Hampshire – required as of October 2021. Check your speed dials / transfer #'s in your Comm. Centers!**
- TERT (Telecommunicator Emergency Response Taskforce) rally was held at the AARF at the IPOC on 5/21;
- SIEC Meeting was held on 5/14, virtually;
- NASNA Monthly Meeting with statewide 911 Administrators – discuss matters of mutual concern;
- Governor's Task Force on School Safety met to provide updates on recommendations and future planning for the Fall school year;
- Discussion with DNCR continues re: Radio planning and consolidation of maintenance efforts;
- Currently undertaking a refresh of our ESF #2 / Communications section of the SEOP – annual review process;

- Met with Nashua & Merrimack relative to Merrimack's planned upgrade of their radio system to an 800 mhz. system, leveraging Nashua's existing system. Timeline not quite nailed down;
- E9-1-1 Commission Meeting will be held, in person, at the IPOC on Friday, June 11th at 11:00. All are invited to attend as there will be no remote option.

E-911 Commission – (Chief Thomas) –

- Affirmed that the meeting will be held tomorrow. He will share the information.

IAFC Director – (Chief Christopoulos) –

- Nothing new....info for FRI is out. Book early.

New England Fire Chiefs – a Division of the IAFC – (Chief Jones) –

- Info on FRI came out May 17.
- The brochure for the NEAFC – IAFC meeting in Portsmouth in June is out and he urged members to sign up for it and also the golf tournament.

Old Business –

- Chief Carrier reminded all of the NHAFC Golf Tournament on August 9 at Lochmere in Tilton.

New Business –

- Chief Thomas shared that the Audit Committee has met and has found no discrepancies. The Audit Trail has posed a few questions but they will be meeting with the Treasurer to clarify.

Good and Welfare –

The next meeting will be held virtually on Thursday, July 8 at 0900 hours.

A MOTION (Best/Beattie) to adjourn the meeting carried at 1716 hours.

Respectfully submitted,
Chief Brent T. Lemire, Ret.
Executive Director/Secretary, NHAFC

June 10, 2021